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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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December 27, 2006

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley *JTM*
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – HERITAGE –
GROUP HOME, WEST COVINA SITE**

We have completed a review of Heritage-West Covina Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Heritage Group Home, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Heritage-West Covina Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 12-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Heritage-West Covina Group Home was providing services for six DCFS children.

Heritage-West Covina Group Home is located in the Fifth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program

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services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

Heritage-West Covina Group Home needs to maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long term goals; include the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans; maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication; and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining life books/photo albums.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:bg
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Narinder Heer, Executive Director, Heritage-West Covina Group Home
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Heritage Group Home
West Covina Site
1923 East Ackerman Avenue
West Covina, California 91791
Phone: (626) 332-4600
License Number: 197801967
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Heritage-West Covina Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current; however, the NSPs are not developed or implemented by the treatment team, and do not include input from the child. The NSPs are not comprehensive, and do not include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations**1. Heritage-West Covina Group Home management:**

- a. Include the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.
- b. Maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are measurable, attainable, and include short and long term goals.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, one child does not have a current court authorization for the psychotropic medication that he is taking.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

- 1. Heritage-West Covina Group Home management maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 2. Heritage-West Covina Group Home management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

Heritage Group Homes, Inc.

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(626) 653-1000 Ph. (626) 653-1005 FAX

05/31/2006

Attn: Candace Rhue, Group Home Audit Supervisor
Department of Auditor-Controller, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple St., Room 515-A, Los Angeles, CA. 90012
Fax to (213) 346-9020

Re: Heritage Group Home-III (West Covina)
1923 E. Eckerman Ave.
West Covina, CA. 91791

Corrective Action Plan

Recommendations:

1.
 - a. Include the treatment team in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans with input from the child.
 - b. Maintain comprehensive Needs and Services plans that are measurable, attainable, and include short and long term goals.

Current Status/CAP:

Recommendations will be implemented as of May 1, 2006. Treatment team and each client will meet on a monthly basis to discuss clients Needs and Services Plan. Case Manager and Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that all team members have input in each clients Needs and Services Plans; documentation of monthly meetings will be kept at facility. Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that corrective action plan is working as intended.

Recommendation/CAP:

2. Heritage-West Covina Group Home Management maintain current court Authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.

Current Status/CAP:

Corrective action plan will be implemented as of May 1, 2006. Upon admission of new clients, group home supervisor and administrator will be responsible for requesting psychotropic authorizations from CSWs. Group home administrator will be responsible for monitoring of psych. authorization (they are up to date, have court log numbers), working with psychiatrist to ensure that necessary information is provided, paperwork is submitted to court, and ensure group home receives psychotropic authorizations in a timely manner.

Recommendation:

3. Heritage-West Covina Group Home Management encourages and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Current Status/CAP:

As of May 1, 2006 group home supervisor will be responsible for providing all clients with their own photo albums and life skills books. New clients will be provided with photo albums and life skills books no later than second week of placement. Administrator will be responsible for monitoring to ensure corrective action plan is working as intended.

Patricia A. White
Administrator